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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WARSAW 001731

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PL](#)

SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTER LOBS ACCUSATIONS AFTER BEING  
FIRED FOR LEAKS

Classified By: Political Counselor Mary T. Curtin for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) Summary: The firing of Interior Minister Janusz Kaczmarek August 8 caught the political world by surprise and revealed perhaps greater internal disarray in the governing Law and Justice (PiS) party than was suspected even when insider Ludwig Dorn resigned as Interior Minister six months before. Some saw the dismissal as an effort by PiS to appease coalition partner Andrzej Lepper's demands for an investigation into the handling of corruption charges against his associates that led to his firing the previous month. Others saw it as a raw power grab by Kaczynski insider Minister of Justice Zbigniew Ziobro, whom many see as determined to eliminate all rivals to his ascendancy within PiS. Kaczmarek is going down fighting, denying that he leaked information and charging Ziobro with inappropriate methods, while the opposition is making the most of battle. Some see this continuing disarray as inevitably leading toward elections, but the Kaczynskis' ability to weather these storms may yet continue. End Summary

¶2. (SBU) The Warsaw political world was jolted out of the summer doldrums on August 8 with the surprise late afternoon announcement that Kaczmarek had been fired as Interior Minister after just six months and replaced by National Security Advisor and confidante of the president, Wladyslaw Stasiak. After the announcement the Prime Minister said Kaczmarek had been the source of leaks which had hindered a corruption investigation--obviously referring to the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau's (CBA) investigation of a bribery deal at the Ministry of Agriculture that had led to the July dismissal of former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture Andrzej Lepper. That dismissal had triggered an ongoing drama over whether Lepper's party, Self Defense (SO), would withdraw from the government and whether there would be early elections. Lepper has demanded an investigation into CBA's actions in the case, making it a condition of his party's continuing presence in the coalition government. The Prime Minister said that Kaczmarek (a former prosecutor with close ties to the prosecutors inside CBA) had lied to him when asked about the leaks. Former National Security Advisor (who previously served as a Deputy Minister of Interior) Wladyslaw Stasiak was immediately sworn in as new Interior Minister.

¶3. (SBU) There is considerable speculation into what was behind Kaczmarek's surprising dismissal. He had been appointed to the job in February 2007 to replace Ludwig Dorn, a PiS insider who resigned in a dispute with Justice Minister Ziobro. Kaczmarek was very closely associated with Ziobro and others in the "law and order" circle inside PiS. He was frequently in the media announcing high profile corruption and crime arrests, and has an image of effectiveness and uncorruptability. When he was appointed Minister, it was said he had wanted to remain in the Prosecutor's office, but took the Interior job when Ziobro recommended him to the

President and Prime Minister. Some immediately speculated that Ziobro was trying to get rid of a potential rival (much as he was seen to have gotten rid of Dorn). Others suspect that the Kaczynskis are looking for some way to keep Lepper in the coalition and avoid elections, and that Kaczmarek would be the sacrificial lamb.

¶4. (SBU) Kaczmarek has not, however, gone quietly to the slaughter. He has gone on the offensive, granting press interviews in which denied leaking information and charged that those who had leaked were being protected. He issued an open letter to Ziobro accusing him of ordering the Internal Security Agency (ABW) to "keep under surveillance, search and humiliate my closest associates," actions he charges "are dictated either by a private war or an intention to conceal your role in the so-called leak of a special operation of the Central Anti-Corruption Bureau... For the Polish Republic to be a democratic state observing the law, not a state of the past era, please apply Law and Justice also towards yourself." In a rambling press conference Ziobro denied Kaczmarek's accusations.

¶5. (SBU) Kaczmarek's firing has already had a ripple effect in the law enforcement world, with Chief of National Police Konrad Kornatowski, who was appointed by Kaczmarek in February, resigned immediately, saying he could not work with anyone else. On August 9 the government announced that the head of the Central Investigative Bureau (CBS), a semi-independent authority in the National Police, had been fired, with conflicting reports over whether he had also been detained. These changes will almost certainly ripple across the law enforcement community, as happened six months ago when Dorn resigned.

¶6. (SBU) The press and opposition politicians have seized

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upon Kaczmarek's statements to lambaste PiS, the Kaczynskis, and Ziobro. Opposition Civic Platform (PO) cited the developments as just another example of the ineffective government of the conflict-ridden PiS leadership. PO's Jan Rokita, who had led the failed negotiations in 2005 to create a PiS-PO coalition, said that it was clear at the time that there was a "devil" inside PiS who was pushing the unacceptable demand that PiS retain all critical internal ministries (Justice, Interior, and Special Services) and that it was clear now that the "devil" was Ziobro. Lepper continued his calls for a parliamentary investigation into CBA's actions (which he has called politically motivated). Rokita (who made his public reputation in a 2003 investigation into corruption in the previous SLD government) agreed there should be an investigation, but that it should not be designed to go after PiS, but rather to unveil the truth.

¶7. (C) Comment: It is too early to know the full fallout from this latest chapter in the never-ending drama of the PiS government. As with Dorn's February resignation, this latest conflict is very much a family fight among formerly close PiS insiders (although Kaczmarek was nowhere near as tight with the Kaczynskis as Dorn and Ziobro) rather than between PiS and its coalition partners. The brewing conflict was unseen by observers outside PiS. It is unclear whether or not Kaczmarek's firing will somehow create a way for Lepper to stay in the coalition by allowing him to claim that something was done about CBA's activities. It is also unclear how far Kaczmarek will go with his accusations and whether he will try to take Ziobro down with him. As the drama unfolded, PO head Donald Tusk remained behind closed doors in a previously scheduled meeting with President Kaczynski, discussing possible elections. The Kaczynskis have managed to weather every storm, most of which they created themselves, but they may have misjudged Kaczmarek's willingness to go away quietly. End Comment.

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